

# From the Upper Chamber



Senate Information Office ♦ 201 Legislative Office Building ♦ Atlanta, Georgia ♦ 404.656.0028

## Report for Wednesday, February 27, 2008

The twenty-fourth day of the 2008 legislative session was called to order by Lieutenant Governor **Casey Cagle**.

Senator **Don Balfour** of the 9<sup>th</sup> stated that the journal had been read and was found to be correct.

Senate Bills 515-525, Senate Resolutions 1029 and 1030, House Bills 111, 257, 455, 984, 1019, 1051, 1086, 1091, 1113 and 1279 and House Resolution 1103 were read for the first time and assigned to committees. The clerk then read the reports of standing committees.

After the morning roll call, Sen. **Bill Cowsert** of the 46<sup>th</sup> led the Senate in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then introduced the *Chaplain of the Day*, Dr. **W. Glenn Doak** of the First Presbyterian Church of Athens, who led the Senate in the daily devotional.

SR 1028 and 1031-1034 were read and adopted.

SR 712, which recognizes and commends the Valdosta State University football team for winning the 2007 NCAA Division II National Championship, was read and adopted.

SR 713, which recognizes and commends **David Dean** as head coach of the Valdosta State University football team, was read and adopted.

SR 904, which recognizes and commends **Ronald M. Zaccari** on his retirement as president of Valdosta State University, was read and adopted.

Sen. **Tim Golden** of the 8<sup>th</sup> took the rostrum to speak to the resolutions and acknowledge the Valdosta State University football team seated in the Senate Gallery.

SR 1019, which recognizes and commends Mrs. **Stephanie S. Hughley**, director of the National Black Arts Festival, for being awarded the William Dawson Award for

Programmatic Excellence, was read and adopted. Sen. **Nan Orrock** of the 36<sup>th</sup> took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

Sen. **Cecil Staton** of the 18<sup>th</sup> took the rostrum to introduce the *Doctor of the Day*, Dr. **Guy Foulkes** of Macon.

Sergeant-at-Arms **Lorenzo Wallace** then escorted Sen. **Staton** and his guests, the Tattnall Square Academy football team, to the rostrum. The clerk read SR 997, which congratulates the team on being the 2007 Class AAA State Champions. Sen. **Staton** spoke to the resolution.

Sen. **David Shafer** of the 48<sup>th</sup> rose on a Point of Personal Privilege to announce the Senate's acceptance of bottled water from the Mayor of Chattanooga, TN as a down payment to the billions of gallons of water that Tennessee owes Georgia.

SR 1014 was read, which recognizes and commends Mr. **Donald E. Vickery** for his exemplary career in the professional golf industry and for his outstanding determination and success. President Pro Tempore **Eric Johnson** of the 1<sup>st</sup> took the well to speak to the resolution.

The Senate Local Consent Calendar, consisting of HB 1003, passed by a vote of 48 to 0.

The clerk read SB 455, which corrects typographical and stylistic errors found in the Official Code of Georgia. Sen. **Kasim Reed** of the 35<sup>th</sup> took the well to present the bill.

SB 455 passed by a vote of 51 to 0.

The clerk read SR 862, which expresses cultural, economic and educational cooperation with the state of Israel.

Sen. **Judson Hill** of the 32<sup>nd</sup> took the rostrum to speak to the resolution. He introduced Israel Consul General **Reda Mansour** and his delegation to the Senate.

The clerk read SB 456, which corrects errors found in Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia, relating to elections.

Sen. **David Adelman** of the 42<sup>nd</sup> took the well to the present the bill.

SB 456 passed by a vote of 49 to 0.

The clerk read SR 753, which authorizes the conveyance of state owned property in the city of Thomaston in Upson County. Sen. **George Hooks** of the 14<sup>th</sup> took the well to present the resolution.

SR 753 was adopted by a vote of 50 to 0.

The clerk read SB 433, which outlines the Certificate of Need (CON) requirements for destination cancer hospitals seeking to commence operations in Georgia. The legislation will make it possible for the Cancer Treatment Center of America to come to Georgia.

Majority Leader **Tommie Williams** of the 19<sup>th</sup> took the well to present the Committee Substitute and Amendment 1, which allows skilled nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities and intermingled nursing facilities to divide and/or relocate.

He yielded to questions from Senators **Ed Harbison** of the 15<sup>th</sup>, **Ralph Hudgens** of the 47<sup>th</sup>, **Regina Thomas** of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and **Emanuel Jones** of the 10<sup>th</sup>.

Sens. **Mitch Seabaugh** of the 28<sup>th</sup>, **Ross Tolleson** of the 20<sup>th</sup>, **Steve Thompson** of the 33<sup>rd</sup> and **Don Thomas** of the 54<sup>th</sup> took the well to speak in support of SB 433.

Sen. **Williams** took the well to close the debate. He yielded to questions from Sens. **Hudgens**, **Renee Unterman** of the 45<sup>th</sup>, **Valencia Seay** of the 34<sup>th</sup> and **Greg Goggans** of the 7<sup>th</sup>.

Amendment 1 was adopted unanimously.

The Committee Substitute to SB 433 was unanimously adopted.

SB 433 passed by substitute by a vote of 31 to 23.

The clerk read SR 927, which commends Ms. **Bertie Mae Garrett** as the Distinguished Senior Georgian for 2008. Sen. **Tolleson** took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

The Senate stood in recess for lunch and reconvened at 1:30 p.m.

The clerk read SB 490, which allows nursing homes to both relocate within the county and create a campus setting in which all services are housed together.

Sen. **Joseph Carter** of the 13<sup>th</sup> took the well to explain the bill.

SB 490 passed by a vote of 41 to 0.

The clerk read HB 967, which exempts medical facilities within the Department of Corrections and Department of Juvenile Justice from the state's CON procedures.

Sen. **Johnny Grant** of the 25<sup>th</sup> took the well to present the bill.

HB 987 passed by a vote of 41 to 2.

The clerk read SB 463, which seeks to conserve the state's water resources by allowing for the regulated re-use of household water, otherwise known as "gray water."

Sen. **Chip Pearson** of the 51<sup>st</sup> took the well to present the Committee Substitute. He yielded to questions from Sens. **Thompson** of the 33<sup>rd</sup> and **Seth Harp** of the 29<sup>th</sup>.

The Committee Substitute to SB 463 was unanimously adopted.

SB 463 passed by a vote of 45 to 1.

The clerk read SB 440, which allows particular non-profit organizations to sell certain pull tab games, such as Bingo.

Sen. **John Douglas** of the 17<sup>th</sup> took the well to present the bill and yielded to questions from Sen. **Bill Heath** of the 31<sup>st</sup>.

Sen. **Unterman** took the well to discuss the benefits that non-profit organizations will receive under the bill. She yielded to questions from Sen. **Douglas**.

SB 440 passed by a vote of 40 to 3.

The clerk read SB 366, which establishes penalties for inmates of state and county jails who unlawfully possess a cell phone.

Sen. **Grant** took the well to present the Committee Substitute.

The Committee Substitute to SB 366 was unanimously adopted.

SB 366 passed by a vote of 49 to 0.

The clerk read SB 403, which would require employers to pay former employees their final pay on or before the next regular pay period.

Sen. **Steve Henson** of the 41<sup>st</sup> took the well to present the bill. He spoke against Amendment 1 and in support of Amendment 2. He yielded to questions from Sens. **John Wiles** of the 37<sup>th</sup>, **Jones** and **Thompson** of the 33<sup>rd</sup>.

Sen. **Seabaugh** took the well to speak to his Amendments 1 and 2, the first of which exempts employers with less than 50 employees. Amendment 2 adds language to state that final pay must be made on or before the next day period or within 15 days, whichever is later.

Sen. **Wiles** took the well to speak against the bill and stated that it is bad for businesses in Georgia. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Henson**.

Sen. **Henson** took the well to close the debate.

Amendment 1 was adopted by a vote of 26 to 16.

Amendment 2 was unanimously adopted.

The Committee Substitute to SB 403 was unanimously adopted as amended.

SB 403 failed by a vote of 22 to 23.

Sen. **Henson** moved to reconsider SB 403. There was no objection.

Sen. **Douglas** moved to reconsider SB 443. There was no objection.

Following the announcements, Sen. **Johnson** of the 1<sup>st</sup> moved that the Senate stand adjourned until 10:00 a.m., Thursday, February 28.

# # # #